

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MORES

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from a purely rational point of view, but it touched upon a matter in regard to which popular sentiment is very tender even when the usage is most irrational. "Many a usage and superstition was so closely interwoven with the life of the people that it could not be torn away by regulation, but only by education." Non-Catholics were given full civil rights. None were to be excluded from the cemeteries. The unilluminated Jews would have preferred that there should be no change in the laws. Frederick of Prussia said that Joseph always took the second step without having taken the first. In the end the emperor revoked all his changes and innovations except the abolition of serfdom and religious toleration.<sup>1</sup> Some of his measures were gradually realized through the nineteenth century. Others are now an object of political effort.

98. Adoption of mores of another age. The Renaissance was a period in which an attempt was made by one age to adopt the mores of another, as the latter were known through literature and art. The knowledge was very imperfect and mistaken, as indeed it necessarily must be, and the conceptions which were formed of the model were almost as fantastic as if they had been pure creations of the imagination. The learning of the Renaissance was necessarily restricted to the selected classes, and the masses either remained untouched by the faiths and fads of the learned, or accepted the same in grotesquely distorted forms. A phrase of a classical writer, or a fanciful conception of some hero of Plutarch, sufficed to enthuse a criminal, or to upset the mental equilibrium of a political speculator. The jumble of heteroge-

neous mores, and of ideas conformable to different mores, caused numbers to lose their mental equilibrium and to become victims either of enthusiasm or of melancholy.<sup>2</sup> The phenomena of suggestion were astounding and incalculable.<sup>3</sup> The period was marked by the dominion of dogmatic ideas, accepted as regulative principles for the mores. The result was the dominion of the phrase and the prevalence of hollow affectation. The men who were most thoroughly interested in the new learning, and had

<sup>1</sup> Mayer, *Oesterreich*, II, 454-465.    <sup>2</sup> Gauthiez, *Lorenzaccio* 230.

» *Ibid.*, 227.